



Boating Infrastructure Grant Program -
A. GRANT BASICS

Purpose of the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program

This program will:

- (a) Create dockage for transient recreational boats 26 feet or more in length for recreational opportunities and safe harbors;
- (b) Provide navigational aids for boaters to use these facilities;
- (c) Enhance access to recreational, historic, cultural, natural, and scenic resources;
- (d) Strengthen local ties to the boating community and its economic benefits;
- (e) Promote public/private partnerships and entrepreneurial opportunities;
- (f) Provide continuity of public access to the shore; and
- (g) Promote awareness of transient boating opportunities.

Definitions of terms used

For the purposes of this part, the following terms are defined:

Construct means engaging in activities that produce new capital improvements and increase the value or usefulness of existing property. These activities include building new tie-up facilities or replacing or expanding existing tie-up facilities.

Maintain means engaging in activities that allow the facility to continue to function, such as repairing docks. These activities exclude routine janitorial activities.

Navigable water means waters connected to or part of the jurisdictional waters of the United States that transient nontrailerable recreational vessels currently use or can use.

Nontrailerable recreational vessels mean motorized boats 26 feet or more in length manufactured for and operated primarily for pleasure, including vessels leased, rented, or chartered to another person for his or her pleasure.

Renovate means to rehabilitate or repair a tie-up facility to restore it to its original intended purpose, or to expand its purpose to allow transient nontrailerable recreational vessels.

Transient means passing through or by a place, staying 10 days or less.

Tie-up facilities mean facilities that transient nontrailerable recreational vessels occupy temporarily, not to exceed 10 consecutive days; for example, temporary shelter from a storm; a way station en route to a destination; a mooring feature for fishing; or a dock to visit a recreational, historic, cultural, natural, or scenic site.

Water-body means the lake, section of river, or specific area of the coast, such as a harbor or cove, where tie-up facilities or boat access sites are located.

What does the national BIG Program do?

This program provides grant funds to States to administer for the construction, renovation, and maintenance of tie-up facilities with features for transient boaters in vessels 26 feet or more in length, and to production and distribution of information and educational materials about the program.

What types of projects can be funded?

Boating infrastructure refers to features that provide stopover places for transient nontrailerable recreational vessels to tie up. These features include, but are not limited to:

- Mooring buoys
- Bulkheads
- Day-docks
- Dockside utilities
- Navigational aids (channel markers, buoys, directional information)
- Pumpout stations
- Transient slips (slips that boaters with nontrailerable recreational vessels occupy for no more than 10 consecutive days)
- Recycling and trash receptacles
- Safe harbors for transients
- Dockside electric service
- Floating docks and fixed piers
- Dockside water supplies
- Floating and fixed breakwaters
- Dockside pay telephones
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- Debris deflection booms
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- Marine fueling stations

- Dinghy docks
- Restrooms
- Retaining walls
- Initial, one-time-only dredging, only to provide transient vessels with safe channel depths to the transient facility.

All facilities constructed under this program must be:

- Secure and safe with service available
- Designed and constructed so as to last at least 20 yrs
- Used by transient boaters (boaters not at their home port and staying not more than 10 consecutive days)
- Designed to accommodate boats 26' in length or greater
- In boating access waters at least 6 feet deep (at low water)
- On designated navigable waters
- Within two miles of a public pumpout
- Open to the public
- Used for the original stated grant purpose throughout the useful life of the project
- Maintained throughout their useful life

Conditions

Facilities that participate in the program must allow the feature(s) constructed under the BIG Program to be open to the general public and provide access to shore along with other existing basic features of the facility such as fuel, pumpouts, and restrooms. Some type of reservation system must also be available to ensure boaters space when they arrive. Access to other nonessential features of the facility is not required.

Reasonable rates (prevailing rates in the area) may be charged to boaters for transient mooring facilities constructed under the BIG Program.

Projects are ineligible for funding if the proposed activities include:

- Activities or construction that does not provide a benefit to the public.
- Law enforcement patrols
- Law enforcement activities against the applicant (i.e. un-permitted structures)
- Law enforcement violations (i.e. operations without permits)
- Degradation of valuable natural resources or cultural or historic nature of the area
- Maintenance dredging
- Routine, custodial and/or janitorial maintenance activities (those that occur regularly on an annual or more frequent basis)
- Construction or maintenance of facilities designed for trailerable boats
- Construction of slips for long term rental (more than 10 days)
- Dry land storage or haul out facilities

Who is eligible to apply?

BIG Program funds are available to public and private agencies and marinas and other facilities that provide transient tie-up opportunities for non-trailerable (26' or over in length) recreational boats.

When is the application deadline?

The next (FY 2007) application deadline is August 15, 2007. The DEP is making this announcement with the belief that funding for this program will remain at levels similar to previous years. The initial Federal authorization for this program expired at the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2003 (09/30/03). Additional monies have come by way of continuing resolution through the Federal FY2005. Therefore, funding for the program is contingent upon program reauthorization by Congress and cannot be guaranteed at this time. All

grant proposals for both Tier I and Tier II projects, are due to the DEP Boating Division, 333 Ferry Road, P.O. Box 280, Old Lyme, CT 06371-0280, by August 15, 2007.

Where do funds come from?

Each state can participate in the BIG Program, which is funded through the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act and administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection is the administering entity in Connecticut. Funding for this program is currently under reauthorization by the US Congress. Authorized by Congress during the summer of 1998, funds come from the Sport Fish Restoration Account of the Aquatic Resources ([Wallop Breaux](#)) Trust Fund. This Trust Fund is contained within the Highway Trust and is being reauthorized under the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 2005. The funds result from a Federal excise tax on fishing equipment, trolling motors, import duties on boats and motorboat fuels.

How are funds awarded?

All funds are awarded to an appropriate State Agency. For Connecticut, The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Boating Division is designated as the administering entity for the BIG Program. The DEP encourages local units of government and private facilities to participate in this program by submitting grant requests for transient facilities to the DEP's Boating Division. Applicants will be notified if their project was not selected at the State level to go to the Federal level. States are generally notified by January of each year of grant awards. DEP will in turn notify remaining applicants of the status. Awarded federal funds can be used to reimburse up to 75% of the approved project costs. The remaining "matching" funds must come from the grant recipient.

Two levels of funding within BIG Program

There are two levels of funding within the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program:

Tier I: An annual maximum of \$100,000 is available to each applying state under the Tier I portion of the BIG Program. However, the Connecticut DEP is making \$90,000 available for these projects; ten thousand dollars goes to administrative costs. Tier I is designed for smaller projects that add transient boating infrastructure to the area and to compete at the state level. Projects will be selected at a minimum funding level of \$30,000 and a maximum of \$90,000. Selected projects must still be authorized by USFWS.

Tier II: The remainder of the BIG Program annual funding (to date, \$8 million nationally, less whatever is awarded under Tier I) is typically awarded to larger projects under Tier II. Tier II projects that qualify at the state level are then competitively judged at the national level. Top scoring projects are eligible for funding by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Please note: While both tiers of the BIG Program are very competitive; the level of national competition within Tier II is especially high. Successful projects are of a superior nature and are submitted with very thorough applications. To be competitive in Tier II, we recommend that even the best projects be submitted with a substantial percentage of matching dollars.

We recommend that if you are considering applying for a Tier II project that you contact us early in the application process so that we can provide assistance on the details of your application.

When can the project begin?

Applicants cannot start a project until they receive notice of the award and enter into formal agreement with DEP. No reimbursement will be given for any work performed prior to entering into a formal agreement with DEP and signed a signed grant agreement with USFWS. The formal agreement is a document signed by the grant recipient, Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection and Attorney General. Any costs incurred prior to the full execution of this agreement are the responsibility of the applicant and will not be reimbursed by DEP. DEP will send the applicant a completed agreement with a formal letter granting permission to proceed with the project. The DEP will facilitate the grant agreement with USFWS and will maintain that paperwork.

Design & Construction

The applicant must not award any construction contracts until after plans and specifications are approved by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The applicant is obliged to cooperate with the Connecticut DEP in order to ensure that the contractors comply with Equal Employment Opportunity requirements. This includes all bid advertisements.

Funded projects must also meet federal ADA requirements for barrier-free access. (See Federal Register 09/03/02) This Federal Register contains information about barrier-free access at boating facilities as well as other types of outdoor recreation facilities.

Design consultants and engineers need to plan accordingly. To obtain a copy of minimum design specifications and ADA requirements for boating facilities funded through the DEP Boating Division, contact: Mike Payton at 860-434-8638.

Compliance

Features proposed under the BIG Program cannot cause damage to the environment nor to historic features. If the scope and nature of your project requires an Environmental Assessment (EA) to be completed, it will be the grantee's responsibility to have the EA prepared and approved. All facilities must comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.